

Job Description

Finance Officer – Finance Shared Services (FSS)

Grade:	Grade 6
Contract:	Full time, ongoing
Location:	Canterbury Campus
Responsible to:	Deputy Finance Manager - Finance Shared Services
Responsible for:	Finance Administrator(s)
Job family:	Administrative, professional and managerial

Job purpose

Working as part of the Finance Shared Services team with a focus for services to Divisions, the Finance Officer will oversee financial administration and associated processes, procedures, analysis and reporting.

The postholder will work in close collaboration with the Deputy Manager of the Shared Services team, as well as with other colleagues and respective service leads in the FSS team for Travel, Procurement, Scholarships and Laboratories to deliver services in areas including month/year-end work, expense claims, virements and journals, monitoring and reconciliation of all divisional budgets, preparing financial reports and data required for high-level budget management and analysis, processing HPL claims, and preparing irregular worker contracts.

Reporting to the Deputy Finance Manager (Finance Shared Services), the role holder will provide professional and comprehensive financial support to enable senior management make informed decisions.

Key accountabilities

The following are the main accountabilities for the role. Other duties, commensurate with the grading of the job may also be assigned from time to time.

- Provide operational management support to Divisions in close liaison with the Deputy Finance Manager (FSS), Business Partners in the Finance Directorate and other staff in FSS, ensuring that Divisional service requirements are met through optimal operational efficiency and compliance with University and other financial regulations.
- Exhibit competency for organised service delivery and customer care, primarily facilitated by the *TopDesk* service management system and other finance systems/facilities.
- Promote adherence to the University's Finance processes and procedures by Divisional colleagues, providing training, guidance and support where necessary, with the aim of achieving economies of scale from transactional process/ system standardisations.
- Provide appropriate support and guidance with the raising of purchase orders, goods receipting, non-POP supplier invoice approvals, credit card purchases and staff expense claims in Divisions.

- Work with Finance Administrators and functional specialists in FSS to deliver divisional service/support requests in connection with timesheets, staff travel booking, field trips, scholarships, internal catering and financial laboratory activities.
- Provide professional financial guidance and advice to staff and students within Divisions with the management of their budgets and key finance processes.
- Carry out the month-end/ financial year-end processes for Divisions in collaboration with the relevant divisional Finance Business Partners including posting of relevant journals.
- Monitor income and expenditure against all divisional budgets ensuring all activity is appropriately coded and budgets are not exceeded. This will involve liaison with budget holders in order to investigate areas of potential over-spend or concern.
- Reconcile divisional pay budgets to monitor under- or over-spends, coding errors, payment errors as well as processing pay claims for timesheet staff.
- Undertake detailed analysis of Divisions' income and expenditure, producing reports and financial forecasts to inform the divisional Senior Management Team's decision-making.
- Provide support with the financial management of Divisions' portfolio of research and innovation awards, ensuring compliance with funder and university regulations. This will include monitoring project budgets, liaison with Principal Investigators and central Research & Innovation Services (RIS) concerning under- or over-spends, initiate funder invoicing, approving financial transactions, providing advice and guidance on funders' terms and conditions (post award), performing financial assessments of budgets for funding applications and providing an efficient service to budget holders in Divisions in connection with their R&I work.
- Lead, motivate and develop relevant staff (notably Finance Administrators), providing clear objectives and managing performance against these, to ensure that staff are appropriately motivated and trained to carry out their responsibilities to the required standards.

Key challenges and decisions

The following provide an overview of the most challenging or complex parts of the role and the degree of autonomy that exists.

- Grasping the service delivery potential of the new Finance Shared Service model to deliver excellent and seamless customer service to Divisions, while actively flagging emerging issues and challenges from the change for speedy and effective resolution.
- Maintaining accuracy when dealing with financial data and ensuring excellent attention to detail when processing payments or checking expenses claims etc. Able to spot discrepancies and resolve them. Impact of making errors could be significant – could lead to financial losses for a Division/ University e.g. on research awards, non-pay expenditure etc.
- Having an excellent knowledge and understanding of the University's financial procedures to enable the postholder to respond to a wide range of queries, ensure financial transactions are carried out correctly, accurately coded and in accordance with procedure.
- Able to work on own initiative, planning own workload and that of team. Deciding what is, or should be, a priority, using their knowledge of the regular financial reporting cycle and

requirements to prioritise work. Able to assist Finance Administrators (Finance Shared Services) in the planning of their work as necessary.

- The postholder will be expected to work autonomously with minimal guidance from the Deputy Finance Manager (Finance Shared Services)/ Divisional Operations: F&R Page 3 of 4
- Needs to understand the context of financial information by acquiring a grasp of the main non-financial factors affecting the Division.

Facts & figures

The Finance Officer (FSS) will be dealing with high volumes of financial administration (invoices, expense claims etc) and will **therefore** need to manage peaks in workload. Their work will be contributing towards general operational efficiency, budget management and spend.

Internal & external relationships

Internal:

All staff and students within the Division; professional services staff within the wider University Director, Finance staff in other departments, Purchasing, Central Finance and Internal Audit.

External:

Including but not limited to: Suppliers, Contractors, funding organisations, external auditors, visitors to the Division (speakers, examiners, academics).

The role holder is expected to demonstrate a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion; promoting collaboration and positive partnerships, working harmoniously with colleagues, students and other stakeholders of all cultures and backgrounds.

Health, safety & wellbeing considerations

- This job involves undertaking duties, which include the following health, safety and wellbeing considerations:
- Regular use of Screen Display Equipment
- Pressure to meet important deadlines such as might be inherent in high profile projects
- There may be a requirement to work evenings and weekends
- Ability to travel in a timely and efficient manner regularly between campuses

Person Specification

The person specification details the necessary skills, qualifications, experience or other attributes needed to carry out the job. Applications will be measured against the criteria published below. Selection panels will be looking for clear evidence and examples in an application, or cover letter (where applicable), which back-up any assertions made in relation to each criterion.

You will use your financial/accounting knowledge and experience to advise staff on day-to-day financial matters within the Division. You'll possess excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to work as part of a team and build positive working relationships with a wide range of people. You'll be able to demonstrate the following skills, experience, abilities and personal interests:

Essential

- GCSE English and Maths (grade C/4 or above) or equivalent **A**
- Foundation level financial qualification (e.g. AAT) or actively studying towards full qualification or equivalent **A,I**
- Previous experience in a similar finance/accounting role implementing financial procedures in a busy environment **A,I**
- Knowledge of UBW (Unit 4 Business World) or similar financial system **A,I**
- Good IT skills in particular MS Office packages **A,I,T**
- Experience of using spreadsheets and databases on a regular basis **A,I,T**
- Experience of answering enquiries, particularly of a financial nature **A,I**
- High level of numeracy, accuracy and attention to detail **A,I,T**
- Strong communication skills with the ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing **A,I,T**
- Ability to communicate and translate financial information to non-finance individuals
- Experience of gathering, analysing data, producing financial reports and making recommendations for action **A,I,T**
- Excellent organisational skills with experience of managing own workload, prioritising tasks as appropriate and effectively dealing with competing priorities **A,I,T**
- Customer focused approach to work with the ability to deliver a high level of customer service **I**
- Ability to build and maintain good working relationships **I**
- Ability to assess outcomes of work and constantly review processes to improve them **I**
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively as part of a team **I**
- Firm commitment to achieving the University's vision and values, with a passion for a transformative student experience and multidisciplinary, impactful research **I**
- Commitment to deliver and promote equality, diversity and inclusivity in the day to day work of the role **I**

Desirable

- CLAIT/ECDL or an equivalent IT qualification **A,I**
- Recognised accountancy qualification (e.g. AAT, ACCA, CIMA) **A**
- Experience of managing complex budgets **A,I**